

Cha-hee Stanfield is a librarian in Chicago. She was five years old when she last saw her father and older brother. When the Korean War broke out, North Korea sealed its borders forever and Cha-hee lost all contact with her father. She never dreamed that more than 60 years would pass without ever hearing from him again.

Cha-hee's family is just one of more than 100,000 elderly and divided Korean-American families. In search of answers, some turn to third-party scam artists to locate loved ones. These "brokers" charge sizable fees and sometimes defraud and blackmail their clients.

As co-chair of the Congressional Commission on Divided Families, Congressman Kirk works to establish an official government mechanism to advocate on behalf of these Korean-Americans. In the 111th Congress, Congressman Kirk secured language in the State-Foreign Operations Appropriations Act directing the State Department to appoint a Special Coordinator to address this issue.

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